FEA: Log of a Forgetful Tactician

Story: FEA: Log of a Forgetful Tactician
Storylink: https://www.fanfiction.net/s/9217050/1/
Category: Fire Emblem
Genre: Adventure/Humor
Author: Scorpio-Rat
Authorlink: https://www.fanfiction.net/u/2579676/
Last updated: 06/05/2013
Words: 18983
Rating: T
Status: In Progress
Content: Chapter 1 to 11 of 11 chapters
Source: FanFiction.net

Summary: The self-chronicled, unabridged adventures of an amnesiac young woman named Aly and her new Shepherd friends. Chrom just hopes his newly appointed Tactician knows what she's doing... A series of diary entries from the perspective of the playable avatar, spanning from the start of Fire Emblem Awakening to the finish.

Chapter 1: Chapter 1

My very first Fire Emblem fanfic ever. I blame Awakening.

This is basically journal entries that Robin (called Aly here) would have made if she actually kept a log. It's basically a loose interpretation of the events of Awakening with added emotions and inner thoughts on other characters as it goes on and she meets new people, forming new relationships. I plan on keeping these somewhat short, like real diary entries.

Journal Entry #1

Uh, I'm not exactly sure how to start this. I've never written in a journal before (or maybe I have and I've just forgotten?), but real tacticians keep logs, right? So I guess I'll just keep going until I have nothing left to write about for now. Chrom got me this book from the village we just saved from bandits. He said something about it being good for me to write things down if I'm concerned about losing my memory again. If you look at it from that angle, it does make sense. It's a well made book, with a thick, brown leather cover and an iron lock to keep it from opening without a key. I wonder why he was so willing to buy something expensive for a perfect stranger he met hours ago. Did he really trust me that much? And he even made me a Shepherd too...

I should start from the beginning. My name is Aly, and I'm an amnesiac, or at least according to Lissa I am. And I should really stop mentioning people I haven't introduced yet. Okay, starting again. I was found sleeping in a field outside of Ylisse, dirty and (kind of) starving in a dark Plegian cloak by Chrom, Lissa, and Frederick. Maybe describing them would be a good idea, in case I need to remember what they look like.

Chrom's a guy with short, dark blue hair, blue eyes, and silver armor on his left shoulder. His right arm has no armor on it, but maybe it's because he wants to show off that green tattoo on his shoulder for some reason. He also carries a golden looking sword in the sheathe attached to his belt.

Lissa is his younger sister, but she looks almost nothing like him and I wouldn't have realized they were related if I hadn't been told. She has blonde hair in two pigtails, blue eyes and wears a yellow dress and buttons on her head…I don't get the last part either, but I don't question it.

Frederick is Chrom's second in command in the Shepherds. He's pretty tall (in comparison to me, anyway), has short brown hair, and wears a huge amount of plate armor, so you can always hear him coming. He's a Great Knight, so he rides a heavily armored horse around in battles which makes him even taller. Did I mention he kind of hates me? Yeah, he thinks my amnesia is "Pegasus dung" (I have to remember that one for later) and is very suspicious of me. But then again, his nickname is Frederick the Wary. Anyway, back to the story.

So yeah, they found me and told me they were part of the Shepherds that patrolled the area. That confused me for the moment because they looked like soldiers, not sheep herders. But I guess if their "flock" was people, then they really were shepherds. They had decided to take me to a nearby town to figure out what to do with me, and as we were walking, we saw that smoke was coming from the town. Rushing over the next hill, it was clear that there was a bandit attack happening. Chrom, Lissa, and Frederick immediately ran off to help out, leaving me alone. I have no idea what possessed me to follow them, but I had weapons so I might as well try!

Anyway, so I ran after them as backup. Chrom seemed pretty surprised to see me, but he accepted the help quickly. Not even Frederick could argue against an extra soldier, as it turned out that Lissa was a Cleric and couldn't fight or defend herself against a trained attacker. She could definitely heal though, something I needed a lot as I got used to fighting (You wouldn't think that books could cause so much pain…). I got used to the barely sharp but very durable Bronze Sword pretty fast, so I could handle the axe-wielding Barbarians without too much trouble. I seemed to almost instinctively know how the weapon triangle worked. Actually, I seemed to know tons about combat and tactics. I could size up someone's skill level, how hurt they were, and how hard they hit at a glance, and I could even estimate how a battle between two people would go without them actually fighting. Before I even realized it, I was giving advice and orders to Chrom and Frederick-and they were listening! Our group of four worked our way deeper into town, Chrom hacking and slashing at any foe in range (he got very passionate during fights) and me picking off bandits from afar with blasts of lightning (I had found a Lightning Tome too). Frederick hung closer to Lissa, ruthlessly taking down the ones who got behind us with his Silver Lance. Lissa patched us up with her Heal Staff when we got too bloody (mostly me). We eventually made it to the bandit's boss, some guy named Garrick who used axes. He looked like a jerk to me, so I wasn't very mournful when Chrom and I double teamed him to his death.

After we killed Garrick, Chrom thanks me for helping to protect Ylissean citizens and asks for me to join his Shepherds as his Tactician. Well obviously, I said yes! What else did I have to do? Frederick deduced that the bandits were from

Plegia, a near-hostile country to the west. Something about their accents was familiar to me, but I can't place it. Maybe I've been to Plegia before? Moving on, the villagers were very happy about us saving them, so happy in fact, that they offered to feed and house us for the night. Lissa seemed pretty excited over the possibility of staying indoors, and I was pretty sure I was drooling a little at the thought of finally getting food, but Frederick declined, saying we needed to get back to the capital. Why is he so strict all the time? We ended up camping in the woods halfway to our actual destination (Much to Lissa's chagrin. I think she swallowed a bug while we were setting up.) and Chrom killed a bear to eat. How he did that with nothing but his sword was beyond my comprehension, but I ate it without question. EVERYTHING tastes good when you're hungry. Actually, that bear tasted pretty good. It might be my new favorite meat now! Strangely enough, Frederick didn't eat any. How weird. So now we're just sitting around the campfire in an attempt to sleep. Scratch that, Lissa and Chrom are trying to sleep. Frederick is watching the camp as I write. Or maybe he's just waiting until I go to bed to relax. Seriously, I'm not doing anything wrong! Why is he staring at me like that? Now I'm all self-conscious… I guess this is as good of a time as any to stop, before Frederick burns a hole in this journal with nothing but his eyes. Gods…

Possible Shepherd,
Aly

Chapter 2: Chapter 2

Journal Entry #2

Wow, it's really hard to write while walking. I keep almost tripping over stuff on the road when I'm not looking, but I really want to get this written down before I forget stuff. Right now, we're walking the rest of the way to Ylisstol with Sully and Virion, two other Shepards that were scouting the area. (Well, Sully's a Shepherd. Virion is just following her around because he thinks she's "beautiful", I guess. His words, not mine.) Sully is not amused. Anyway, last night we were attacked by zombies, and no that's not a normal thing around here, I checked. After I put the journal away and went to sleep, Frederick woke me up again a few hours later to help him find Chrom and Lissa. (I had a weird dream about a dark mage woman killing me while yelling about her husband. The name Hulloc sounds familiar though. Well, no more bear meat for me before bed…) Apparently, they had wandered off into the woods a short while ago. The sky was a weird red color and there were fireballs falling from the sky as the ground shook. How the heck did that not wake me up? So yeah, we grabbed our weapons and took off in search of them. It was kind of hard to breathe with half the forest on fire and smoke billowing everywhere, but we managed to locate Chrom fighting off these weird looking soldiers who moved like puppets and spat purple fumes from their mouths.(I also learned that Chrom can jump really high.) Definitely not humans. There was a crazy looking portal in the sky spitting out more zombies and Lissa was cornered by one with an axe. But before we could even try to get to her, another person came from the portal (thankfully not a zombie) and held it off until Chrom could kill it. The new guy ran off after to kill some more of the undead, leaving Frederick and me to help out.

The clearing we were fighting in had a few broken down forts to bunker down in, so we used those for cover. Zombies suck at maneuvering in small spaces, I guess. Chrom and I stuck close to each other, taking turns whacking at the zombies from our cover. Frederick stayed in the trees with Lissa until we killed the immediate threats, and then they caught up with us. Minute later, two more people approached from the east. It turned out to be Sully and Virion.

Sully was a redhead who wore red armor over her torso and arms. She didn't seem the type of person to care about her looks (or being subtle, but that was here nor there), but she was definitely in shape.

Virion was a blue haired man with a strange accent. He dressed formally under his light armor and wore shades of blue. He talked almost constantly, but he was a good bowman.

After fighting with each other (verbally and physically) for a bit, they helped us out. Virion told me not to put him in direct combat because he was an archer, and close quarters was suicide to him, so I told him to follow after Sully's wake. As a Cavalier, she had better mobility and was able to easily fight her way to us with her Bronze Lance, with Virion trailing behind and picking off survivors with his Bronze Bow. Archest or Archers, indeed!

Anyway, we managed to kill the zombie boss (Zomboss?), the guy from earlier rejoined us. Chrom and Lissa thanked him for helping, and he introduces himself as simply Marth. Looking closely at him now, he didn't seem very masculine to me. He was wearing light armor, a dark blue outfit and boots, and a butterfly mask that hid his eyes. His voice even sounded sort of artificially gruff, like he was trying to be manly. Suspisious…

Chrom looked like he was thinking the same thing too, but Marth wasn't interested in getting interrogated. He said something about how something terrible was going to happen and how this attack was only the beginning before he ran off again to do…something. (Yeah that wasn't suspicious at all. Nope.)Lissa was still sort of dumbstruck over Marth's appearance. Maybe she's crushing on him? I'll have to bother her with that information later...

Since it was early in the morning anyway, Frederick decided we should just pack up and keep going. So now I'm walking in the back of our little group, behind Sully and Virion with Frederick clanking a few feet away from me. I'm slowly starting to ignore his presence now. I guess I'm getting used to his almost constant hovering. I also learned that Sully swears…a lot. I don't think I've even heard of half the words she's said until today, mostly at Virion whenever he hits on her in that flowery, poetic way of his. I'm faintly impressed by that. No one else seems to mind, so I didn't comment on it. As long as Virion doesn't start asking me to marry him, Sully can do whatever she wants.

Chrom said we would get to see Ylisstol in a few minutes, so I should probably put this away before we get there! I wonder how big the capital is...

Zombie-Slaying Tactician

Aly

Chapter 3: Chapter 3

To Simply Unkown: I would have replied directly it your review was signed, so I'll just put my response here.

Yes, I do pretty much have my pairings picked out, including Aly's (He's introduced in this chapter), but i won't tell the rest because that kills the fun! I'm literally at the second to last chapter of the game (#24) in Classic Mode because I'm a sucker and like to restart the map whenever someone kicks the bucket.

I know I said these would be short, but this one had a ton of characters introduced in it so it stretched on. Sorry!

Journal Entry #3

I cannot stress this first part as super important any harder. Possible-amnesiac me of the future, pay attention to what I'm about to write. Today, the day we started our march to Regna Ferox, I may have found the man I wish to spend the rest of my life with. Yes, I know this is sudden, but I'm very serious right now. VERY. He may not think of me in the same way now, but he'll come around. Eventually. I know there are probably social taboos and possible laws involving a knight marrying someone beneath his status, but I don't care if I have to study Ylissean law books all night if it means I can find a loophole of some sort! Before I go to into details about him, I should write what events led up to this. And Chrom's starting to look at me funny, so I should probably calm down. I apparently make weird faces when I'm writing about some things.

We got to the capital of Ylisse yesterday at around noon. All I can say is Ylisstol was huge! Everywhere I looked, there were big brick buildings, and banners, and flags, and people. Some were selling wares like swords or healing tonics, others just milling around and enjoying the day. A few even waved to us as we passed them by. I guess they're familiar with the Shepherds after being protected by them for a while. And on the top of a large hill was an actual castle, with arches and towers and a stone wall around it. I just sort of gaped at everything, trying to take a mental picture of it all to last forever. Sully parted with the group soon after we entered the city, with Virion trailing behind. I had no idea where they went to, but Lissa said she'd show me later. Thankfully, the area didn't seem affected by the night before's quakes and fire storms (or the zombie infestation).

And then the Exalt showed up, surrounded by Knights and strange soldiers on Pegasi (Pegasus Knight is the term, right?) wielding lances and swords. I was told that Lady Emmeryn (the Exalt) was the ruler of Ylisse and served as symbol of peace to her people- a constant reminder of the first Exalt who helped the divine dragon end the coming of the Fell Dragon long ago. (Frederick told me all of this. Maybe he's nicer than he first came off as...) No wonder everyone in the immediate area looked so happy when they saw her. She was pretty much the only person who could resist going to war with Plegia immediately. She even looked serene, with her light green hair and eyes giving her an almost calming aura. She had the same symbol Chrom had on his shoulder on her forehead. (I wonder if it hurt to get a tattoo there. Lady Emmeryn must be super devoted to her country, I guess.)

And then Lissa dropped a metaphorical lightning bolt on me by casually telling me that Lady Emmeryn was her sister. Which of course made her a princess and Chrom a prince and I really hate being out of the loop. Not cool, guys! Realizing that I had been informal with royalty, I immediately started apologizing (because going to the dungeons would be terrible, and I'm not cut out for prison anyway.) But Chrom just laughed me off and said he didn't like formalities. It does explain why Frederick hasn't turned them into Silver Lance shish kabobs after all the teasing and poking he's endured. He's kind of obligated to protect them. Anyway, we followed the Exalt back to the palace to give a report on the current situation. The inside of the palace was just as pretty as the outside. The halls were long and covered in red carpet, the walls decorated with tapestries of heroes and dragons. Lady Emmeryn was very warm with all of us, personally greeting everyone in our group. Chrom told her that the bandits were taken care of, but the borders still needed watching. The white haired, lightly armoured woman (I now know her name is Phila) standing beside Lady Emmeryn apologized for letting the bandits slip through her Pegasus Knights. She was apparently focused on guarding the Exalt, which wasn't really a bad thing. And then of course Lissa puts the spotlight on me by saying how I helped them out, with Chrom jumping in to say he was officially making me a Shepherd. I could have died of embarrassment when Emmeryn personally thanked me. And just as I was basking in admiration, Frederick had to completely ruin the moment by saying I might be a Pegian spy. (And to think I was starting to like you...) Emmeryn said that if Chrom trusted me, then so would she, but she thanked Frederick for being cautious. I resisted the urge to stick my tongue out at him (It wouldn't have helped the situation) and thanked the Exalt instead.

Turing to more serious subjects, we found out that the zombies have spread all over Ylisse. Emmeryn and Chrom went to a council to discuss matter, and Lissa dragged me off to who knows where. We ended up going to a large, single story building nearby the castle: The Shepherds' garrison. It was filled with crates and simple furniture, with weapons and other supplies scattered around. The garrison had a main room for gatherings and a few hallways that led to the

barracks, a kitchen, and bathrooms. Outside was a simple training area. A couple of people (Sumia and Vaike) were hanging around in the main area, where we entered, and a third came rushing in soon after. Maribelle was very protective of Lissa and went on about how incredibly worried she was when we were gone (not me, just Lissa).

Maribelle was a noble, right down to her clothing choice. I wondered what a "sophisticated lady" such as herself was doing in a garrison. She had her dark blonde hair tied back and she always looked like she was haughty about something. She carried around a pink parasol and was obsessed with manners.

Vaike was pretty much the polar opposite of her. He's loud, cocky, blonde, tanned, obnoxious, and doesn't wear a shirt most of the time. His weapon of choice was an axe and he talks in the third person, referring to himself as 'Teach' sometimes. He's not very smart though...He's a generally nice guy when you get to know him.

Sumia is...uh...I'll just describe her appearance first. She has light brown hair she keeps down and dark brown eyes, dressed in light but still somewhat solid pearl tinted armor. ...I don't want to sound mean, but she's a klutz. That's the only term I can accurately describe her with. She trips over quite literally nothing and breaks things all the time. This somehow gets worse whenever Chrom is nearby (which I didn't think was possible). Sumia tries hard though (sometimes too hard), and she really cares about people and animals, especially horses.

According to Maribelle, Sumia was apparently worried about Chrom during the time he was gone. Lissa teased her over it for a bit, but she denied it was anything more than concern for the captain. She's not smitten with Chrom at all. Nope. Not in the slightest.

They finally realized that I was standing around and Lissa introduced me, making me sound like the greatest thing since the shield was invented. Vaike, of course takes the opportunity to show off his belching skills. I admitted that he was pretty impressive, but Maribelle was less amused and left the room. I think she's angry with me now... Oh well, maybe she'll come around later. Chrom came back from the meeting and Sumia immediately faceplanted trying to walk across the room to him. He thinks it's because of her boots that she trips so much. Silly Chrom. He has literally no idea that she likes him. I think it's kind of cute, in an awkward sort of way (even though I'm almost as awkward as her sometimes. I'm such a hypocrite). Anyway, Chrom announced that we were going on a volunteer mission to Regna Ferox the next day to petition for their allegiance just in case things went south with Plegia. It was a northern united kingdom where many warriors lived, so they would be good to have on our side in a fight. Everyone still in the room wanted to come of course except Sumia, but Chrom managed to sway her into just following us if she didn't think she could fight yet.

Chrom also handed me a large box, saying that Emmeryn wanted to give it to me. It turned out to be full of huge books on tactics, maps and historical records. And at the very bottom was a wooden board that looked like a chess set. I'd have to look into it later. Seeing as there was limited space in the Barracks, the Shepherds were forced to pair up in each bedroom. The only open rooms for me that were designated for girls were Maribelle's and Sumia's. The other room was Sully's and another person named Miriel's. I decided to pick Sumia as a roommate, mostly because Maribelle probably wouldn't have appreciated it if I moved in with her. I think Lissa stays there too sometimes, so I didn't want to inconvenience her either. Sumia didn't seem bothered by me so I guess it was a good choice. I brought my things to my new room in Ylisstol but didn't bother unpacking them, since we were leaving anyway. After the events of last night, I went to sleep pretty quickly.

The next day, we packed up all the supplies we needed in the caravan and were standing just outside the city, about to start our march north, when *he* came. His name is Stahl, and he's amazing. I have no idea why I think he's so great. I just do. Maybe it's his messy brown hair that is never in any sort of order, or his dark green Cavalier armor, or maybe his deep brown eyes that somehow make me incapable of intelligent thought.

So yeah, as soon as he ran up to us, I zoned out. I think Vaike said he forgot to tell Stahl that we were leaving today. Maybe. I was too busy standing there like an idiot. And then Stahl said that he had missed breakfast trying to get here on time. Isn't he so intelligent? Not a lot of people know how important breakfast is. I could listen to him talk about food all day... And then I finally spoke up, only to ask him what his name was. Of all the things I could have said, I chose that. I could just hit myself! Chrom introduced him and then Stahl said he heard about me from Miriel. Hopefully about how awesome a Tactician I am, right? Right? A girl can dream, can't she?

So now we're all marching to Regna Ferox, me fighting against the urge to walk right next to Stahl, but then he might see what I'm writing, and I'm pretty sure I can't talk correctly around him anyway...I think Lissa wants to talk to me about something, she's waving really frantically at me. I swear if she brings up how out of it I looked this morning in front of Stahl, I will spontaneously combust out of sheer embarrassment.

Love Struck and Still Recovering

Aly

Yeah, my romance is...ridiculous, so don't take Aly too seriously here. This fanfic does have Humor as a sub genre. XD She'll mellow out. Maybe.

Chapter 4: Chapter 4

Yeah, short chapter this time, but the next one should come soon. Maybe Fridayish.

Journal Entry #4

We're almost to Regna Ferox and we've stopped marching for the night to set up camp, so I decided to write while I set up my new Battle Planner.

It turned out that the chess-set thing that Emmeryn gave me was something tacticians use to prepare for battles. It's a wooden frame with a removable piece of glass on top where you can slide a map of an area under. Once you set up the map, you can position the wooden pieces that represent your troops in different places and work out plans. Right now, I'm customizing my generic chess pieces to match the Shepherds, each individual piece representing a person. Chrom's a blue painted King piece with a long sword, Frederick is a blue Knight piece with a shield and lance, and Lissa is a pawn painted yellow and holding a staff. The others I'm still working on, but I should be done by the time we get to our destination, and then I can finally use it for a real skirmish!

We actually ran into some Risen on the way here (Risen are what we're calling the zombies now) and we had to fight them off. Thankfully, Frederick spotted them before they spotted us (At least he's useful for something other than bothering me…), so we had some time to prepare ourselves. The area we were currently in was divided by a river with a single bridge connecting the two sides. If we made it to the bridge, we could use it as a chokepoint to control the amount of Risen we had to fight. But first, we had to handle the small horde on our side of the bridge.

I divided our forces into three small groups, Sully, Frederick, and Chrom would come from the left, while Virion, Stahl, and myself (for tactical purposes only!) came from the right. Lissa and Vaike would stay in between and slightly behind us as we advanced (Vaike had somehow lost his axe in the span of five minutes). Since she still wasn't confident in her combat abilities, I sent Sumia to the very back to keep watch for more Risen. Everything went according to plan, with Sully tearing through sword and lance wielding Risen as Frederick and Chrom backed her up. Stahl and I worked our way through the trees, cutting down the axe users with his sword (he can use both swords AND lances, isn't he talented?) while Virion picked off the Risen Stahl and I didn't immediately kill. One of them had the guts to actually hit Stahl, so I fired off a Thunder spell before he was further injured. That poor Risen was pretty much a grass stain when I was done with it. Apparently, anger makes tomes stronger or something… He even thanked me for the help! I'm pretty sure I swooned a little when he said that, but he didn't seem to notice. I'm definitely not leaving his side in any battle from now on! I mean, who else could protect him from surprise attacks?

As we all carved a path to the bridge, Miriel showed up with Vaike's axe. Miriel is a mage who wears the typical robes and pointed hat of a magic user. She has straight red hair and a wears a pair of glasses. She always uses really complicated words and reads tons of books. Occasionally, she conducts scientific experiments. She and Vaike seem to have an interesting relationship with each other…

Now that I had two more units to work with, the battle became even easier. Once our forces met up at the choke point, Sully and Vaike positioned themselves to take on the brunt of the Risen that were funneled onto the narrow bridge, while Miriel and Virion stood behind and launched volleys of fire balls and arrows. After wearing then Risen down, Sully and Vaike backed off a little to switch with myself and Stahl and we our advance further, closing in on the Risen Chief and picking up some dropped weapons along the way. Vaike, Chrom, and Virion finished the lead zombie, with Vaike getting the finishing blow with his axe (he's a Fighter, by the way.)

After the fighting ended, we realized just how far our zombie problem had spread. We would need to keep a close eye out for another possible attack. Nearby the battleground, Lissa, Chrom, and I found a stranded and injured Pegasus. It freaked out when Chrom approached it, but then Sumia came over (after falling down again…) and calmed it right down. I knew she liked animals, but I had no idea she was this good with them, and neither did anyone else by their reactions. She said to go on ahead without her while she helped the hurt animal, and Chrom offered to make some time to wait. (It's like he's in denial or something. Chrom, you are so obviously in love, it hurts me. I really need to stop shipping my friends...) Sumia surprisingly rejected his offer, saying that Ylisse was more important than herself. We left her as requested and continued marching until we got closer to the northern border, where we set up camp. We made sure to leave a clear trail for Sumia to follow us by.

So now we've pitched the tents and started a fire. I can actually smell something from the pit Frederick dug for cooking in. I just hope that Sully isn't anywhere near there… I wonder if Stahl would like it if I cooked something for him. I don't really know much about making things from scratch, but I could probably ask someone who knows what they're doing. I can just imagine it now….

I present Stahl with a cake I made completely by myself, and he loves it. We then ride off into the sunset on the back of his noble steed all the way to the church to get married! It's completely fool proof. Okay, maybe it won't be that simple, but I have to start somewhere, right?

Oh yeah, and Chrom's running around the camp trying to discreetly take down the posters that Frederick put up in all the tents, but not before I saw it. It's definitely a… interesting piece of propaganda, that's for sure. Unbeknownst to him, I took mine down before he could get it. (Not for me of course, that'd be gross! Chrom's like a friend to me.) I bet Sumia would be interested in it though. I should definitely save it for later, just to watch her squirm over it. Well, I should keep working on these chess pieces before we go to sleep for the night. The Cavalier pieces take extra long to paint.

Getting Kind of Cold Out Here

Aly

I might start writing out Supports sometime after this chapter, but only the ones that directly involve the Avatar, and they would be in regular third person format. Any other Supports between characters won't be witnessed as a whole, but the aftermath or parts of it might pop up in a journal entry (like Chrom and Frederick's C-Support). They would take a little longer, but I don't want to get boring doing just Journal entries all the time. I wanna experiment a little...

Chapter 5: Chapter 5

Next chapter's going to have C-supports for sure, and then the next one will be another Journal Entry.

Journal Entry #5

Regna Ferox is COLD. I am literally freezing in the rooms Khan Flavia let us have! You'd think this jacket I wear would help me, but it's doing just about nothing to keep me warm. The icy air somehow goes straight through it! And don't even get me started on what outside feels like…We had a rough time getting here too.

The day after we defeated the Risen, we continued our march north, the weather getting more and more disagreeable as we went. Sumia still hadn't caught up with us, but we didn't really have the time to slow down and wait. She would have to meet us at the border. At first, I seemed to be the only ones affected by the cold, huddling nearby Stahl on his mount (horses gave off a lot of heat, actually…and I wanted to walk by him anyway) , but soon we were all shivering in the unforgiving temperature. I was personally surprised that Vaike and Chrom weren't complaining earlier. They barely cover themselves up at all. And then at one point, it started to snow. And that was Lissa's breaking point. Frederick decided to be a gentleman for once (or maybe he's only not a gentleman to me...) and offered to use his horse as a windbreaker for her. Finally, I spotted the Longfort, the border and protective barrier between Ylisse and Regna Ferox. Frederick mentioned how the Khans (the Feroxi rulers) had become wary of visitors and would most likely require some diplomacy to get by. Chrom did not seem super confident in his diplom-ing skills, but I wasn't going to mention that to him. I was too busy keeping myself from turning into a Tactician-sicle. I really need to get a better coat.

Against our better judgment (okay, my better judgment. Did I mention that I was really cold out there?), we approached the fort anyway. But I did have enough sense left to send Frederick out scouting ahead of us, which was lucky because he reported back that the border guard was mobilizing. So we were pretty much forced into another fight. Yaaaay. Now that we had some time to prepare ourselves Frederick suggested to me (in his own, snarky manner) that I should get the supplies in order and pick the best people to deploy. Oh well, at least Chrom still respects me.

This time, I got to use my Battle Planner. Sliding a map of the Longfort into the holster, I started working out the best units (I refer to each person as units when planning with the chess pieces) to take with me and the positions they should be in based off Frederick's report on our enemies. They apparently have all unmounted Soldiers, Archers, and Myrmidons toward the fort's front, heavily armored Knights guarding the upper gates, and Fighters on the rooftops. I think Frederick also spotted one with a Hammer. I would have to keep that in mind when sending people places. The Longfort had two entrances to the roof, where the commander was, so we needed to get up there quickly if things went south in negotiations. I decided to leave Virion behind to wait for Sumia, mostly because his arrows wouldn't do well on Knights, and there were no walls to pick anyone off from behind. Archers weren't very good when attacking castles and forts until they got inside, anyway. Everyone else was divided in half again with me, Stahl, Vaike, Lissa, and Miriel taking the right side and Chrom, Sully, and Frederick on the left. Frederick could make up the difference in units and Cavaliers had better mobility in the snow, so they should move fast. After making sure that everyone was clear on the plan, we cautiously made our way to the gate. Chrom and Frederick tried one last time with diplomacy, but Raimi (the Knight Commander) mocked their efforts and called us brigands. I was pretty outraged. How dare she? We didn't even look like Barbarians! She continued to accuse us of being imposters, and then ordered an attack on Chrom. A wave of Javelins fell from the rooftop, aiming right for our effectively helpless Commander-until he suddenly disappeared in a blur of pink and white.

Sumia had finally caught up-and riding the same Pegasus from before as well! She had somehow gotten to Chrom just in time, pulling him into the air and onto her mount. They circled in the sky above the fort for a few moments before she made a landing behind our lines. Sumia was surprisingly graceful when riding a Pegasus, I was really impressed. And I now have a Pegasus Knight at my disposal! Seeing Chrom and Sumia riding together had given me an idea, so I altered our strategy a bit. I took out two groups and further divided them into as many pairs as I could, letting each unit cover the other. That was all I could really do before the Feroxi charged us again. Not wanting to kill the guards we were trying to make peace with, we took our time getting to the gates, using trees and snow drifts as cover as we advanced. Lissa stuck to Vaike as he buried his axe in some Soldiers, inflicting incapacitating, but nonlethal wounds. Stahl actually let me ride with him this time, me holding onto his back with one hand as he attacked swordsmen with his Bronze Lance. I pitched in with a few sword swings of my own, earning us a key. Miriel blasted the unsuspecting Knight on the other side of the gate with her Fire Tome, his armor useless against magic.

On the left side, there were more Archers. Pegasus Knights were extremely vulnerable to arrows and wind magic, so I told Sumia to stick close to Chrom until they were felled. Sully tore through the poor Archers with a Bronze Sword, highlighting how terrible they were in close combat. Frederick took a few arrows for her, the projectiles doing little but denting his armor. Chrom had some trouble with the lances, but he had some help from a strange Knight who joined the battle early on. (Kellam was supposedly behind us the whole time and we didn't notice. I guess he went to fortify the

weaker side of our assult.) Kellam was very good at taking hits, so he blocked the gate when it was forcefully opened up, injuring the other Knight. Sumia finished him off from the air, letting the rest of our troops come in unchallenged. The rooftop was more open and had fewer guards to get past. We could even see the Commander standing by the inner gate!

I was so excited, that I totally forgot about that Fighter guy with the ridiculous hammer. And it seems that Stahl forgot about him too, because soon he was swinging his very dangerous weapon at us! A few seconds later, I was knocked off Stahl's horse by the sheer impact of the hammer, vision going blurry form the fall. I caught a glimpse of green armor hitting the snow beside me, and then the sound of an axe sinking into flesh. A warm feeling spread over my body, bringing me back to my senses. Finally able to see clearly again, I saw that Lissa had healed me and was currently trying to drag Stahl into a corner. He must have blacked out from the hit. Miriel was fending off some soldiers to cover for us, and Chrom and the others were working their way over to our side. Pulling myself together, I helped pull Stahl and kept him steady as Lissa checked him over. Thankfully, he had only taken a glancing blow to the arm. Broken bones were easy to patch up with a Heal Staff, and Stahl was conscious and able to move again in short order. It still scared me straight though... It turned out that Vaike had defeated the Fighter who attacked up, claiming the Hammer in the process. Stahl got back on his horse again and our group moved on, closing in on Raimi.

Now with our entire army together, the single Knight stood no chance. Miriel launched a series of Fire spells, forcing Raimi to go on the defensive. This let Vaike get a clear shot of her with his new super effective Hammer. A single strike to her side brought her to her knees in an instant as her armor crumpled like a sheet of paper. I bet that changed her tune. Another victory for the Shepherds! (Oh, and then I tackle-hugged the crap out of Stahl. All that tension had to escape somewhere… He took it in stride though.)

After she recovered and got a closer look at Chrom, she finally believed our claim. At least she apologized for her mistake and escorted us to our destination to make up for it. And then Frederick said he was wrong about the diplomacy-is-best thing, putting the icing on my cake for the day. It feels good to be successful…
Finally arriving at Castle Ferox, Raimi left us temporarily to get the Khan. I mused aloud about how incredibly manly and hairy the Khan must have been…right until I saw that they were a WOMAN. Sometimes I wish I could just sink into the ground… I decided to stay silent from then on. It turned out that Flavia was the East-Khan. She had dark blonde hair pulled back like Vaike's, dark spin, and was clad in deep red armor. There was both a sword and an axe one her person. She looked classy in a rougher sort of way. It's hard to explain. Anyway, she apologized for the border mix-up and said that their borders have been harassed by Plegians wanting to stir up trouble for a while. Chrom showed just how much he sucks at political talk (he has about no tact whatsoever when it comes to language), but Khan Flavia was fine with it. I guess that's how everyone speaks here.

Getting to the point of the visit, Chrom asked for troops, but Flavia could't provide them because of her lack of authority. She explained that the East and West Khans fight for total rule every few years, and the West-Khan is currently in power. Lucky for us, the next tournament was in a few days, and we volunteered to fight in it for the East. If we win, we get our alliance. Apparently, the West-Khan also found a new champion to fight, someone rumored to be a skilled swordsman. I wonder how tough this guy is going to be...

Now we're hanging out at the capital until the tournament begins, resting up and replenishing our supplies. After the way I handled the Hammer incident at the border, I've been thinking that I need stricter training. And the only guy I can think of that won't go easy on me is….dare I even say it? Frederick. I'll ask him after dinner for a few training lessons, but I have a feeling that I'll regret this. Looks like I'll be spending a whole lot of time with Freddy.

And I heard that Chrom's birthday is coming up in a few weeks, so I want to get a suitable present for him. Not really sure what to get him though. And now that we have a spare moment, I should probably go talk to Sumia after seeing that her do that crazy save with Chrom. It's nice that she's getting some positive attention now. (And I want to show her that poster) I have this strange feeling that I've forgotten something else. Oh well.

Wish Us Luck and Maybe a Blanket

Aly

P.S. Gods, I forgot to say hello to Kellam! I feel terrible now.

Chapter 6: Support 1

Here's my first support. I'll probably do the Frederick one next.

C-Support: Stahl

Aly mumbled to herself under her breath, digging around in her belongings spread around her room in Castle Ferox. The Shepherds had been staying in Regna Ferox's capital for a couple of days now, and the Tactician was getting cabin fever. Usually, she'd take a walk if she grew restless, but outside was snowing pretty hard. For some reason she had a strong aversion to the cold, and had no desire to go out unless she had to. Maybe it had something to do with her life before her amnesia happened. In order to occupy her time, she started thinking of what her fellow Shepherds might need help with. And that had reminded Aly of Chrom's birthday. Even though they had just recently met, Aly had a strong connection with her Commander that he seemed to feel as well. She would feel miserable if she didn't get Chrom a suitable present. And that was what led to her tearing her room apart in search of a gift.

"Now, what would he want more than anything? Hmm... Maybe a sword?" She picked up a fancy rapier she had found while they were marching and decided to keep. It would definitely be practical. "Wait, what am I thinking? He already owns the most treasured sword of all..." How could she have forgotten about Falchion? She put the rapier away and continued looking.

"Heya, Aly! You thinking up a birthday present for old man Chrom?" a familiar voice said from the door. Aly froze for a moment, before turning around to see Stahl standing in the hallway. She must have left her door open again, too focused on her objective to remember to close it. And her things were thrown all over the place too… She could feel a blush coming on already.

"He's hardly 'old,' Stahl... but yes, I am. And to be honest, I'm at a bit of a loss for ideas." She admitted. She was pretty proud of herself for keeping her cool so close to him.

"Ha! Isn't that a pickle!" Stahl leaned against the doorway, making a clanking sound as his armor banged together. Why was he wearing his armor anyway? He usually kept it off when not fighting or marching. Aly decided to ignore it for now.

"Buying for royalty would be hard enough, but we're in the middle of a war. It'd have to be small, to transport easily with the caravan, and nothing excessive..." she explained further. Maybe Stahl had a good idea. He's been a Shepherd for much longer than she had.

"Yeah, cheap is good. Chrom's never been much for gold and glitter, anyway. I was actually thinking of brewing up a special concoction for him," He admitted. Aly became much more interested. Well, more interested in Stahl than usual.

"You mean like a potion or tonic? I didn't know you dabbled in such!" There were quite a few things she didn't know about Stahl, she thought. He blinked in surprise and nodded, unused to people thinking of him in a special way.

"My father is an apothecary, and he taught me the trade."

"Homemade gifts are always the best! Would that I possessed any such talents..." Her expression became more subdued as she racked her brains for information on herself. Maybe she did have a talent and had forgotten it. Not remembering anything of her past was frustrating at times. Watching Aly darken so quickly because of her amnesia bothered Stahl for some reason. He hated seeing anyone down and the Tactician was no exception. Maybe if he suggested something for her to do…

"Er, say. My ingredients are quite costly and difficult to find in the wild..." She lit up almost immediately again.

"Perhaps I could gather them?" she asked, briefly reminding him of an excited child, but not in a bad way. He smiled.

"Yes, exactly! Then the present could be from both of us."

"Perfect! We can solve both our problems in one fell swoop." Today was becoming more productive than she originally thought it would turn out to be.

"Then it's a deal!" Stahl said, turning to leave again. "I was actually planning on leaving now to go look for some leaves I need." The mention of leaving the comparatively warm castle sobered up Aly quickly. Well, it explained why he was dressed for battle. You never knew when Risen would appear.

"You mean you're going outside?" He laughed at the horrified expression on her face.

"Yes, that's where most trees tend to grow. Are you coming, or did you change your mind?" Aly hesitated, looking out the window at the still falling snow. It was probably still freezing like it was when they arrived, but she had just said she would help Stahl get his ingredients. She didn't want to disappoint him.

"…Give me a moment to get ready," she said. He smiled again, making her regret the decision slightly less.

"I'll be by the gate when you're done!" Stahl disappeared down the hallway, leaving nothing but the sound of his boots on the tiled floor. Aly sighed and fastened her coat all the way up to her neck, sticking a Thunder Tome and an Iron Sword into her pocket and belt. It wouldn't do to be unprepared in case of an attack. She exited her room, closing the door behind her before she walked through the castle towards the gate. Stahl was standing nearby, his brown horse saddled and wearing its own plate mail.

"Stahl!" she waved to grab his attention. He turned to greet her.

"You ready to go?" he asked, getting onto his horse and holding out a hand.

"Hold on." She flipped up her hood, obscuring her eyes and part of her face with the coat's shadow. "Now I am." He bit back a laugh.

"You look like a Dark Mage now. Do you really hate the cold that much?" She stuck out her tongue and grabbed his hand, pulling herself up to sit behind him.

"Yes, yes I do." Stahl rolled his eyes, but he directed the horse out of the castle, stepping out onto the snowy plain. Aly cringed as the wind hit them, but Stahl ignored it and continued on, leading them to the forest farther away. As they rode, she gradually relaxed, adjusting to the temperature. Maybe this ride wouldn't be so bad after all.

An hour later, the pair rode back into the castle's gates, Stahl sniggering under his breath and a cold and wet Aly clinging to his back. The guards gave them strange looks, but neither Shepherd said a word until they were inside. As soon as they were out of earshot, Stahl broke into a loud laugh. Aly glared at him, but couldn't keep a straight face and started laughing too.

"I can't believe you did that!" he managed to get out.

"I only did it because you asked!" she said, trying not to leave a puddle of melted snow in the hall they were standing in. After searching for the right tree, Stahl had tried to reach the top branches to get the unfrozen leaves, but his armor impeded him too much. He had then suggested that Aly try, as she was less bulky. Not realizing that he wasn't being serious, she scaled the tree and got a handful of what they needed. She had then lost her balance coming back down and fell into a snow drift, head first. Stahl dug her out, but by then she was soaked to the bone. They had returned immediately after to dry her off. "I think I got snow down my shirt…" she shivered and laughed again.

"Come on; let's go see if anyone has extra clothing for you." He grabbed her hand and led her down the hall again, causing her to blush. That ride really hadn't been that bad in the end, when she thought about it.

"Hey Stahl, do you kno-, why is Aly soaking wet?" They both turned to see Sully behind them, looking confused. Stahl scratched the back of his head sheepishly.

"Uh…training accident?" Aly giggled from behind him. Yes, not bad at all.

Chapter 7: Support 2

A little shorter than the last support, but I couldn't see a good enough reason to expand it farther. The next chapter is another Journal entry, and I'll try to get it up sometime within the next week. Enjoy the last Support for now!

C-Support: Frederick

Aly was really regretting asking Frederick to train her right now. This man was a slave driver! After she had come up to the Great Knight with her request, Frederick had agreed surprisingly quickly, saying that he admired her willingness to improve herself physically for the benefit of the group. The smile of his face had lured her into a false sense of security, making her forget what Chrom had said the day they met.

"Frederick only smiles when he's about to bring down the hammer."

And boy was he not kidding… It had started off well enough, with Frederick leading her to an indoor training ground. She had half expected to be forced outside again, so this was a pleasant surprise. They started off with proper sword grips, and moved onto actually swinging it after a straight hour of being told she was doing it wrong. After Frederick was finally satisfied, they moved onto endurance. Endurance meaning a series of spars, of course.

When Frederick sparred, he did not go easy. He fought as hard as he could without completely overpowering the opponent, pushing them to their limits. And then as soon as they got used to the pace, he picked it up again. This led to Aly feeling like a punching back for his practice sword, bruises most likely forming under her clothing. She could barely keep going at this rate. Frederick narrowed his eyes, standing before her with his weapon drawn.

"Your grip, stance, and breathing are wrong. Focus, Aly ...Again!" He barked. She tiredly gasped for breath and fixed her position for the hundredth time. She had too much pride to give up now.

"Ready!" she said with as much enthusiasm as she could muster. They charged at each other again, dulled swords sparking a moment as they clashed. Aly dodged and parried as Frederick bore down on her with a series of quick swings. After a few minutes, he managed to send her own weapon clattering to the floor, leaving her open for him to point the tip of his sword ah her throat. Her eyes went wide and she stayed perfectly still, but he suddenly sheathed it and backed away.

"That's enough for today. Your form has improved considerably. The pace of your progress is remarkable." He said, faintly pleased with himself. It seemed that Aly was finally coming around to his way of thinking. Frederick had always suspected the Tactician of being up to something. They had found her in a field, unable to remember anything but her own name and his lord's. She claimed to know nothing, but she could strategize like a veteran. She followed after Chrom like a lost dog, but she had no romantic interest that Frederick could see. He drove himself half insane trying to figure out what she was trying to gain from helping the Shepherds, but he could never find anything.

Aly took the opportunity to collapse to the ground, panting like a dog. The cold tiles felt amazing after working out like that. She huffed a few times trying to speak.

"Th-thanks... I feel like...I've got the basics … down now... But... S-so tired... I think I'm dying..." Frederick briefly wondered if she was faking her exhaustion to look helpless, but it was rather difficult to imitate looking like death warmed over.

"Ha! You're exaggerating! Or at least I pray so. Otherwise you might as well die here—you won't last long on the battlefield," he said disdainfully. Aly sat up, thinking of what he was insinuating. Was she really that out of shape?

"I suppose...but I'm exhausted nonetheless... But you... You've hardly broken a sweat?" And he was wearing all that plate mail too. It must have weighed at least an extra twenty pounds!

"I should certainly hope not. If a little training winded me, I would be in no shape to serve Chrom." Well, that explained his peak condition, at least. Frederick was very devoted to Chrom, and his duty seemed to create some sort of friction with her own job as Tactician. It wouldn't hurt to try and get along with him, if only for Chrom's sake. So she resisted the urge to say something sarcastic in response, and went with a compliment instead.

"Well, I'm impressed. You must train hard to build such endurance," she said, having gained some respect for the disciplined man before her. Frederick was unaccustomed to her praise, as he shifted awkwardly on his feet.

"Well, I awaken before dawn each day to build the campfires... Then, whenever we march, I scout the trail ahead, removing rocks and such... Wouldn't do to have someone turn an ankle mid-campaign, now would it?" he stated.

"So that's why... I always thought it was just a fixation with pebble collecting..." Aly mumbled. So there was a method to his madness after all. He tilted his head slightly.

"Beg pardon, did you say something?" She smiled as genuinely as she could, not wanting to accidentally offend him to his face. Her journal was another story, however…

"Er, nothing important! But I owe you for this training session, so let me help you with tomorrow's fire. It'll be a snap with my magic. Find a tree, hit it with a lightning bolt, and presto!" Considering that Frederick didn't have to waste his free time training her to not suck at swordplay, she should at least offer him something in return. She really was thankful for it, even if it did feel like she was going to die at times.

"...Instant forest fire," He said bluntly, not looking very amused with her offer.

"Oh! Well, yes, I suppose that...could happen..." She got up and cleared her throat in an effort to cover her embarrassment. Really, a lightning bolt? What was she, a child? "In any case, I do still owe you a favor. Whatever you like—name it and it's yours. You needn't decide today, of course. Think it over for the next time we meet." Aly smiled again. It took a moment, but Frederick gave a tentative smile back. A minor success for the Tactician.

"I am unaccustomed to asking favors, but if you insist, I shall find something." He gave a respectful now of his head and made his exit, leaving Aly alone. If they kept this up, maybe she and the Shepherd's second in command could work together after all. She winced as she tried to walk, feeling the strain in her muscles. If he didn't kill her first, Aly amended.

As Frederick performed the rest of the day's duties, he though back to his training session with Aly. It had surprised him when she had asked to be drilled in swordsmanship, but he had no reason to refuse her request. It did give him an excuse to watch her closely anyway. Going over all that he had seen today, he came to the conclusion that Aly was… normal. Maybe he really was just overly paranoid. He had done some research on amnesia when they had first gone back to Ylisstol, and the symptoms matched up. She remembered basic skills, but not her personal life, and amnesiacs often grew attached to the person they first meet, explaining her sudden loyalty to Chrom. That didn't mean he had to like her hanging around his Lord though. He would still watch her, but maybe he could try and get to know he better as well, if only for teamwork purposes.

Chapter 8: Chapter 8

Quick update, but the next one will still happen sometime next week. I'm wondering if I should try to fit some of the Paralogues in here... Donnel's too cool to leave out of this.

Journal Entry #6

We did it! We actually won the tournament and got our extra support from Regna Ferox. And we got a new member of the Shepherds at the same time from the West Khan, a Myrmidon named Lon'qu. He's a quick and precise swordsman, basically. And he doesn't question orders...as long as I don't give them directly. I'll explain why later, but first I'll recap our battle with Marth. That's right, Marth, the mysterious masked hero from the woods, was there. (What a coincidence. I bet he's following us...)

Anyway, the day of the tournament arrived quickly, and we were led to the crowded Regna Ferox arena. It was massive, big enough to hold a small scale battle (which I guess it was supposed to do, as an afterthought), and had stone arched walls with no roof, letting the sun stream in. Torches were secured to the arena walls, filling the arena with a bright, but soft orange glow. A huge crowd of Feroxi citizens was seated high above us, cheering and screaming for the coming fight that would decide their ruler for the next few years. The terrain was hard, smooth tile, nothing that would trip up or impede someone. The opposing army was already in position, a small group of Fighters, Knights, and Mages, led by the West Khan's champion swordsman, Marth. We had no idea he would be there, so we were definitely surprised. Chrom tried to question Marth, but he was brushed off immediately, leading to an impromptu sword fight. Interestingly enough, I did get some information from their duel. Marth's sword is identical to Chrom's, down to the last detail. That alone was a cause for concern because there was only one Falchion in existence (Chrom told me this fact). Another thing we noticed was their fighting styles. Marth was almost literally Chrom's mirror image, even able to recreate that crazy buzz saw spin Chrom did (I still have no idea how he did that in the first place, but I digress). And get this: Marth said that his father taught him to fight. Definitely wierd.

Chrom retreated back to our side and I started planning. I felt the need to warn everyone not to underestimate Marth or his men after seeing the show he just put on. We would need to take this fight slowly and carefully. There was no room to retreat and no place to hide in a stadium, so we needed hardy people who could take a few hits and keep going (or were good at dodging). I was originally planning on moving as one group, but splitting up again would be more efficient and make sure we weren't blindsided by the approaching enemy. Each army was only allowed a few units, so i had to pick wisely. After much debate (and some begging from certain people), I decided on Sully (for mobility and speed), Vaike (for his hammer skills), Stahl (he can hit hard and move quickly at the same time), Chrom (not like I could get him to stay behind anyway...), Sumia (Pegasus knight are never out of room to manuever), and Lissa (to heal of course). I sat this battle out, giving orders on the sidelines. Sully and Vaike were sent to the left side of the field, while Chrom and Sumia handled the right. Stahl and Lissa traveled up the relatively unoccupied center, able to aid either side if they needed it. It turned out that the left needed them first. Sully was cutting up Fighters and mages with a vengence, but they wore her down after a few straight fights. Vaike jumped in to handle a Knight, giving her a short may not be quick, but Knights moved like glue in that heavy armor, so he easily landed a devastating hit with his Hammer, ending the short battle. Stahl (with Lissa riding behind him) helped Sully defeat the last Fighter on the left so she could finally get patched up with a Heal Staff. (I admit, I was biting my nails at this point) Chrom and Sumia on the other hand, were tearing through the right side nearly unopposed. Chrom was getting pretty beat up, but he kept going until the job was done, with Sumia taking down the lone Mage with ease. I wasn't really paying attention to what Chrom and Sumia were doing during our stay in the castle, but they were working together very efficiently, about as well as Sully and Frederick did during our last battle. The two groups met up in the middle, now much closer to Marth than before.

Lissa healed up Chrom before he went to engage Marth, our Pegasus Knight circling above him in case he needed to move fast. Chrom tried to question him again, but he refused to speak anymore about himself, so they fought again. Marth held up for a while, but he just wasn't fast enough to get a solid hit on either of his opponents. they wore him down until a lance stab from Sumia knocked him on his back. He gave up shortly after that without any protest, and it was officially over. Flavia approached to congratulate us and to agree to our alliance. She seemed pretty happy over her temporary promotion, even throwing an impromptu party for us all. It's good to be appreciated sometimes...Another man came up to us after, introducing himself as Basilio, the Khan we kicked out of leadership. He was a big guy, with dark skin, an eyepatch, and no hair. He was dressed kind of like Vaike, but with fancier golden armor. He didn't look too sad about his loss though, and introduced his former champion to us as a contribution to our cause. Asking about Marth gave us no new information on him, (Lissa did mention how dark and mysterious he was, which set Chrom's brother instincts off. I just lightly poked fun at her.) but he said that Marth beat Lon'qu in a sword duel, even though Basilio claimed his Myrmidon was highly skilled, or at least on par with the masked man. Lissa thought that it was strange that Lon'qu lost, and tried to get close to him to see him better, but he started acting oddly. He apparently has a problem with women, but Lon'qu said that he would stab anyone that Chrom asked him to. (I think I'm going to like this guy, he doesn't

ask questions.) We accepted him without protest, sticking around only until the party was over before departing for Ylisstol. We would be there by tomorrow at the pace we're marching at. I asked Chrom earlier on one of our breaks to test Lon'qu out for me (he refused to spar with any female, so i couldn't get a good idea of his skills myself). Gods, was he fast! he used a curved sword called a Killing Edge and he was really effective with it, but he was good with any sword. Lon'qu got around Chrom's sword with barely any effort, hitting the gaps in his armor with incredible aim, even in the heat of a fight. I don't doubt Basilio's claims now...Outside of a fight, he was sort of...distant and quiet. He got along with the guys, but he avoided the girls like they were plague infested (including myself. I had to corner him with a tree to tell him the signals we used in battles. It was ridiculous.) I hope he gets used to everyone soon before it starts to affect his performance... I wonder if we'll see Marth again after this. He ran off after the tournament, and he left so many questions behind. I have some deep thinking to do about him, because this just doesn't add up. Oh well, I'm sure I'll figure it out. Stahl is calling me over for something now, so I better get going. I think those few days to relax did wonders for our friendship, and the more we hang out, the more things I learn about him. I just wish there was something to learn about me...

On a Winning Streak,

Aly

Chapter 9: Support 3 and 4

AN: I did 2 supports in one this time because I felt they were kind of short, so the next update will get back to the plot. It will be either this weekend or sometime next week. I'm trying to work on updating my other fanfiction too, so that slows me down a bit.

(edited to add depth)

C-Support: Chrom

Chrom was a literally a born leader. His very blood was the blood of ancient Hero-kings, and people respected it. But that didn't make him arrogant man. It was quite the contrary, actually. People seemed to naturally gravitate to him when they needed someone to give orders and make decisions, and it put pressure on him-humbling pressure. Chrom bore the weight anyway, trying the best he could to do what was right, just like his sister Emmeryn. Every duty Emmeryn performed, she did it with grace, to the point where it was near impossible to go against her without feeling in the wrong. She wished for peace, and it held for fifteen long years of her reign. He would do anything to keep it, and that was what Chrom strived for. Lately, this was getting harder to achieve, with Plegia constantly trying to provoke them with bandit attacks. His group of Shepherds tried their best to keep Ylisse together, but they were starting to falter. And when they faltered, they turned to their Commander. All that pressure was starting to make him crack, but then he found Aly. She was a somewhat strange amnesiac who looked barely 18 years of age, but she was a Tactician. Sure, she was a bit naïve at times, she constantly fought with Frederick, she was as stubborn as an agitated pegasus, and she had a short temper when it came to people's taunting of her, but she took some of the burden of leading from Chrom, and he would always be grateful for that. Yet sometimes he had thoughts that he was putting too much of a load on her. So he promised himself he would check up on her more, just to make sure his friend didn't overdo it. He finally got a chance to talk to her alone after departing Regna Ferox.

"Finished training for today, Aly?" Chrom asked, approaching his Tactician as she walked back to her designated tent. The Shepherds had set up camp for the day after getting halfway back to Ylisse, and the vigilante force was starting to wind down. Aly had just finished drilling with Frederick when Chrom had found her.

"With combat practice, yes. But I thought I might review a few battle histories…" She responded, thinking of the other things she still needed to accomplish today. Just because she was training more didn't mean she could slack off on her strategic studies. Her nonchalance about her workload fueled his concern that she was maybe doing too much at once. Maybe he shouldn't have pushed her into being his Tactician so quickly after becoming an amnesiac.

"You should relax a bit," Chrom said, touching her lightly on the shoulder. "Put your feet up. Experienced soldiers rest when they can. On a campaign like this, you never know when the next battle might break out." Aly gave a weary smile.

"Heh, so I've noticed. With all that's happened recently, we've barely had time to even eat." They always seemed to be doing something lately, and it was rather draining on everyone. Chrom sighed. Now he felt as if he were using her, even if he wasn't actually trying to.

"It's been a tough road, to be sure. And it's only going to get harder." Aly shrugged. She worked pretty hard, but she tried not to stay up too late into the night. Unless something caught her attention during her studies, then all bets were off…

"I do try and rest when I can, though. A lady needs her beauty sleep, after all." Chrom stopped, looking confused. "...What? Did I say something?"

"Er, no... No, it's nothing. It's just that... Well, I just didn't consider you the type to care after beauty and such... I suppose I've never really thought of you as a lady." He admitted, smiling nervously. He had a feeling that this conversation could go south very fast if he wasn't careful. Maybe if he didn't beat around the bush about it, she wouldn't…

"Excuse me?!" Aly's voice rose, attracting the attention of a few people around them. Chrom backed off a little. Okay, that strategy obviously failed.

"No! I mean-I didn't mean-not like that! That is to say, a "lady", per se..." He tripped over his words, trying to find the best way to explain his reasoning. "Er... You know, how you fight and strategize, and... Not to say a lady can't fight, but... Gods, this is coming out all wrong." Why were women so complicated?

"My goodness, Chrom. You're the scion of a noble family, aren't you? Didn't they teach you manners at your fancy schools growing up?" Aly ranted at the retreating Commander.

"Oh, gods, yes. Of course they did. We spent a whole term on etiquette." he said, trying to assert himself again. Half the

camp was watching at this point.

"Perhaps you could use another term, this time on how to talk with a lady." Chrom paled at the thought of a second term of schooling.

"It's just my image of a lady is someone so prim and proper...perfumed, and pretty... Nothing like you at all!" he said quickly, not thinking about his words as hard as he should have. "When I look at you, I just don't see a "lady." Does that-...Er, Aly? What... What are you doing with that rock?" The anger in her eyes had tempered, leaving only a gleam of malicious intent, and she now had a decent sized stone in her hand.

"I'm thinking a sharp blow to the head might help fix your eyesight." She said darkly, tossing it up and down. Chrom paled even more and took a few steps away.

"N-no, wait! It was a just a joke! Ha ha... ha?" He gulped when she didn't laugh with him. "...Gotta go!" He turned and left, dodging between the tents as people jumped out of his way. She hesitated before going back towards her own tent, dropping the rock and muttering to herself. She didn't really have the time to chase him down like she wanted to.

"I don't believe it. The little craven actually ran away! What kind of manners... Sheesh..." Her expression softened, and she sighed. All her anger had dissolved in an instant, like water in a teakettle. "Oh, well. Perhaps it's only fair. It's not like I think of him as a gentleman, let alone some fancy noble." There were other people whose opinions carried more weight to her-not that she didn't care for what Chrom thought. They had an oddly constructed, yet solid relationship. She made plans and he gave orders. Why he had let a person he found on the side of the road be his Tactician, she still didn't know. Why she felt the need to try her best for him confused her further. She knew him for what, a few weeks? But here she was, willing to sit in a tent with him for hours discussing battle plans and diplomacy, willing to train her mind a body to handle any situation he might need help with, willing to die for any cause he saw fit to chase after. It was like she and Chrom had an invisible bond the moment they met, but she had no idea where it came from. What was she even doing again? Right, reviewing battles records. At least those were straightforward in comparison to men…

C-Support: Virion

Aly say in front of a crate, her Battle Planner spread out in before her. She had been working on strategies for hours, running different scenarios on different maps to test her effectiveness. She was completely in love with her new tool, and had been playing around with it whenever she had some free time to kill. She couldn't wait to get back to Ylisstol and raid the library for more books on tactics to try.

"So if the Cavaliers spread out in a fan…And the Pegasus Knights sweep in from the flank…" She mumbled, moving around a few of the pieces shaped like horses. The sounds of the camp faded into white noise as she concentrated. In her head, she could literally see the soldiers and the enemy clash. She could picture the constantly shifting battlefield as clearly as reality. But there was something off about her simulation that she just couldn't put her finger on.

"Goodness, I can practically see smoke rising from your head. Whatever could have you working at such a fevered tilt?" She jumped a little and looked up to see Virion leaning over her shoulder, studying her handiwork curiously. Aly rolled her eyes, refocusing on her "game". Virion loved romancing the female half of the Shepherds, but he tended to tone it down near Aly. He figured it wouldn't be smart to irritate the person who sent you out to battle.

"I'm practicing strategies and scenarios on this game board. After a hundred forced marches, these pieces are still ready for more. It saves me from running everyone ragged with training exercises," she explained, only half paying attention to the Archer behind her.

"…How very clever. You even carved little enemy forces for them to fight. I'm impressed. And that doesn't happen often… with other people, I mean." There was a hint of smugness in his voice, but that was normal for Virion, so she wasn't offended. Actually, it was mildly flattering. He could be noble and charming when he wanted to be, she could give him that.

"Well, as long as I control friend and foe alike, it's not as effective as I'd prefer. After all, I can't plan for the unexpected when I know all the moves ahead of time." She had suddenly realized the flaw of playing a one man game of chess, but she couldn't think of a solution to it. Virion hummed thoughtfully before going over to sit across from her. He had spent large amounts of his free time attempting to woo Sully, who had taken to verbally jousting with him and occasionally physically jousting to get him to leave. He had a feeling she was just playing hard to get though. Aly, on the other hand, usually didn't rise to any bait he could set; therefore she tended to ignore him. Using nothing but hi good looks and charm wouldn't cut it this time, as she was completely infatuated with the Stahl to the point of not really noticing other men in that way. But if he volunteered to go against her in a battle of wits, how could she refuse?

"Then permit me to be your opponent. I shall stroke with the nobility of the lion and defend with the grace of the swan!" He said loudly, as if he were going to war. Aly raised a brow. Since when was Virion a tactical person? The only few people who were willing to play her in strategy games were Muriel and sometimes Frederick. Everyone else knew they would lose eventually, so they didn't try. And what was with his weird animal simile? She couldn't understand similes at all, they weren't literal enough for her….

"Because swans are…good defenders? Er, never mind. I accept. So then, we'll take turns moving units until one of us claims the other's commander. Agreed?"

"Agreed and agreed again! Oh, what fun! …Begin, please. By all means." He picked up an enemy piece, twirling it around between his fingers.

About a full hour later, Virion and Aly were still absorbed in playing war. Virion made a surprisingly unrelenting opponent, managing to drag out the match for so long. Aly had to admit that he was good practice. He was definitely making her sweat with his unorthodox tactics. She pushed a piece forward, only to see her mistake as soon as her hand left the carving. She bit her lip nervously.

"Hold! I need to retract my last move."

"Ha ha! Were that all enemy generals so generous! But alas, this is war. Checkmate, my good lady." His knight slid forward to meet her commander, ending the game. Aly groaned and tipped her miniature Chrom over.

"…Blast! I hate to admit it, but I am well and truly beaten," she said.

"Oh ho! I told you I was both a lion and a swan, did I not?" Virion boasted, leaning back in his chair.

"More like a chicken and the far end of a horse!" Aly retorted, her temper flaring up already. She might work for royalty, but she wasn't exactly taught to speak by them. "I'm no noble lord, but your strategy wasn't exactly what I'd call honorable."

"Heavens! Aren't we plainspoken." Aly huffed angrily, but controlled herself and got up from her seat, putting away the pieces of the Battle Planner.

"At any rate, I appreciate the practice, but I must return for a meeting," she said, sticking the board under her arm. Virion was disappointed. He half expected her to challenge her to another match.

"But I've barely had time to gloat!" He pouted.

"Ah, well, all part of the simulation. In actual war, you see, the loser is never present to witness gloating." She briefly stuck her tongue out at him before leaving his sight, not giving him time to stop her.

"No, wait! Don't leave, Aly! Let us play again!" She heard him calling from a distance, but she kept going. Okay, so maybe she was a bit of a sore loser. That didn't make her a bad Tactician, right?

Virion sat back down, seeing that she had escaped him this time. Oh well, this just gave him some time to plan his next attempt at grabbing her attention. He fingered his bow in contemplation. Next time, he'd try the battlefield. Then she'd see his magnificence.

Chapter 10: Chapter 10

AN: Yeah, sorry about the chapter delay. I did say I was going to slow down a bit on the updates. And to Anonymous, I did appreciate your review, and I went back to the last three Supports and edited them slightly to add some more character depth to them. The next time I do Supports, I'll try to expand them even more. Hope you guys like them better from now on!

Journal Entry #7

I think I made a new friend today. Sure, it only took saving her from being King Gangrel hostage and Ylisse's scapegoat, but I still managed to pull it off. Maribelle actually isn't nearly as arrogant as I had first pinned her. She's more on the strict and uptight side. So as long as I don't cough, burp, sneeze, breathe too hard, put my elbows on the table, or anything else remotely unladylike in front of her, we should be fine. (This is gonna suck, isn't it?) At least I get to boss her around in combat…

Oh yeah, and we're kind of at war with Plegia now. Oops. And it all started with a simple bandit attack…(everything seems to start with bandits, don't they?) We got back to Ylisse without any trouble, surprisingly enough. We were all expecting another Risen attack, but there are small wonders in the world, I guess. And of course things got worse as soon as we got comfortable. Chrom and Lissa had gone to report to Emmeryn about our success, leaving me and the rest of the Shepherds to our own devices in the Barracks. The guys got a room set up for Lon'qu, while the rest of us unpacked our personal thing before starting to unload the caravan. Maribelle was mysteriously absent, but the others thought that she might have gone home for a while we were gone. (We were quickly proven wrong, weren't we?) A few hours later, Chrom and Lissa came back with the ugly news. The Pegasus knights had reported that Plegian soldiers had been sighted inside the borders less than a day ago. They ransacked a southwest village and kidnapped a Duke's daughter. It took me a bit, but seeing how freaked out Lissa was, I managed to guess that was where Mirabelle went (Everyone else understood immediately, but you know how no one likes to tell me these things…). Lady Emmeryn had agreed to negotiate with King Gangrel, and Chrom had volunteered us to guard her, along with Phila's Pegasus knights. Not like we wouldn't have followed the Exalt to save Mirabelle anyway, but it gave us a reason to tag along with her.

And so we repacked our things and got ready to leave again for the next morning(will we ever get a real break?). The night before we left, I met Ricken. Ricken was a mage like Muriel, except he used Wind magic more. Oh, and he was really short (but don't say that to his face, he gets all angry). He wears blue robes and a floppy tipped blue mage's hat over his red hair. He looked pretty young, maybe 16 or so.

Anyway, Ricken wanted to come with us to Plegia, but Chrom said that he was too young. They argued a bit, but Chrom told him to guard the Barracks while we were gone. Ricken still looked pretty frustrated when we left him.

The next day, we marched to the border town. It was a rather uneventful journey compared to the last one, but I wasn't going to complain. I took the time to work out a few strategies in my head, preparing for the worst. Judging by the general consensus on Plegia's ethics, we would probably need one. We were met with a still smoking city, buildings half-destroyed and houses ransacked. A few dead bodies were still lying on the ground, though the other townspeople seemed unscathed. Emmeryn got a hold of the Duke and got a recount on what had happened. It was just as Phila had reported. Plegian soldiers dressed as bandits had razed the village and killed a few people as examples. Maribelle was visiting her father and had tried to stop them from hurting anyone else, but they captured her and dragged her off. I gained some new respect for her then. It takes guts to get in the way of an armed soldier with no weapons to use. Of course, this made Chrom even more fired up to go after Plegia (not that he needed more convincing), but the Exalt calmed him down again. It wouldn't help us going into the negotiations ready to pick a fight. The villagers pointed us in the border's direction and we set off again, much more subdued than before. I fell to the back of the group, nervously flipping through my Thunder tome. This entire incident gave me a bad feeling and it only seemed to get worse as we grew closer to Plegia. (I have no idea why I was so freaked out just being there. Had I had a bad experience at the border before I lost my memory?) The landscape became more barren and rocky, large plateaus forming canyons to walk through…and for enemies to hide in. This was an ambush waiting to happen, but we couldn't just turn back around, could we?

We eventually reached an area deep within one of the trenches of stone. Waiting for us on higher ground was a red-headed man with a rough-looking beard and a gold crown sitting on his head. His clothing was strange, but it looked custom-made and was probably expensive. His skin was tanned from harsh sunlight, and his face held a confident sneer. This was Gangrel, the Mad King of Plegia. And he definitely looked insane. He mocked Lady Emmeryn for a bit, but she ignored his taunting. The white-haired woman dressed in black armor and leather introduced herself as Aversa. They showed us Maribelle, who was being restrained by a burly looking bandit. She was yelling and throwing insults at him (some of them I didn't even understand…what does troglodyte mean?), but his grip was steady, and he ignored her

squirming. Lissa called out to her, unable to do anything else. I t was sort of heart wrenching to watch actually. I felt terrible just standing there, but I didn't want to jeopardize anyone's lives. A few of the other Shepherds shifted and mumbled frustrated words, but they stayed put as well. Aversa charged her with sneaking pas the borders and hurting some soldiers, and Maribelle flipped out, calling her a liar (It was pretty obvious it wasn't true, considering she was a healer with no way to hurt anyone). They further called her a spy and were thinking of punishing her, but were willing to "negotiate" for peace (What a huge load of Pegasus dung. Wow, that is fun to say! I mean write…). Maribelle repeated what happened a the village, her story matching with the one we got, but Gangrel claimed those were nothing but bandits. Thank the Gods Emmeryn wasn't buying the drivel coming out of his mouth. She asked for Gangrel to release her so they could talk it out, but Gangrel wanted something as an apology in exchange for her life. That set Chrom off again, prompting Gangrel to insult him too before requesting the Fire Emblem.

The Fire Emblem was apparently a Yilissean treasure with the potential to give someone amazing power. What they did with it was more questionable, however. Emmeryn claimed it was destined to save the world if it was ever threatened. The Mad King of course just wanted to start a war with it. He claimed it was revenge for what the last Exalt, Chrom's father, did to Plegia. The last war between the two countries was a crusade against Plegia's religion, killing many people. Emmeryn said the Ylisse was peaceful now, but Gangrel continued to ask for the Fire Emblem. Maribelle yelled at her to keep it, saying it wasn't worth less than her life (wow, I totally misjudged her…). Gangrel grew tired of talking and ordered an ambush. Chrom fended the small group off with almost no effort, fueled by his hate for Gangrel (I already hate him too and I just met him). Gangrel took the opportunity to declare war on Ylisse, sending even more of his soldiers into the maze of ravines. We quickly gathered our own forces and formed a plan.

We would use the cliffs to our advantage and slowly work our way to Orton, the Commander of this particular force. He was situated somewhere at the top of the cliffs. Phila's soldiers had managed to get a good look at our opposition and gave me some information before retreating behind us to guard Emmeryn. We would face the standard classes of Plegian soldiers: Brigands, Myrmidons, Dark Mages, and Wyvern Riders. I'd never seen someone riding a dragon before (heck, I've never even seen a dragon), but they supposedly were weak to the same tactics as Pegasus Knights. Except they were bulkier…and occasionally breathed fire. (I could already tell how fun this was going to be…) And then we spotted Maribelle farther above us, who had somehow escaped along with…Ricken? I guess he trailed after us (Chrom's going to kill him). The Plegians would soon notice them too, so we needed to get up there fast.

Modifying my plan slightly to account for the flying enemies and an unexpected rescue, I reorganized our forces. Virion, Lissa, Stahl, I, and our new Myrmidon Lon'qu would immediately move up the cliffs to retrieve Ricken and Mirabelle. Chrom, Sumia, Sully, and Vaike would go west before ascending, securing an abandoned fort along the way. It was a rough fight, that's for sure. We were fighting on Plegian soil, so they knew the area better and could move faster. Ricken was fending off about three guys at once with a Wind tome at one point and got pretty scraped up in the process, Maribelle unable to find a safe time to step in and help, but he used a vulnerary to patch his wounds. Lon'qu (Thank the Gods he didn't seem to mind women in combat, because Chrom stuck him with Lissa earlier) and Virion got to him shortly after, finishing off his opponents so Ricken could be properly healed. Stahl and I had a rough time too trying to take over a fort.

Gangrel had prepared reinforcements to argument his troops already stationed here, and they poured out of the multiple strongholds and swarmed us. Sure, they weren't very good, but they wore us down. The Dark Mages didn't have the best accuracy, but they hit hard with their magic and were surprisingly sturdy in combat, unlike the physically weak mages we were used to. It took multiple strikes from Stahl with his sword to take each one down, and by then he was heavily wounded. I ended up taking the lead and hitting the remaining Brigands with Thunder strikes to cut a path into the fort so he could rest.

Vaike and Sully were having a better time with the lower fort, having taken down the guard before the others inside could be warned. The unprepared soldiers surrendered their stronghold as soon as the Shepherds burst in, weapons drawn. Sumia and Chrom caught up to the rest of us, the Pegasus Knight in an even worse condition than Stahl was. They must have run into another group of Brigands (or Sumia just fell again, but she doesn't really do that in battles). A Wyvern Rider must have seen her as an easy target, because he swooped down from the cliffs in an attempt to finish her, but Chrom's Falchion quickly turned the tables on him. He cut into that armless dragon like it was papier-mâché instead of flesh (Maybe dragons were weak to Falchion? I should look into that)! They were able to secure the last fort, and after a round of healing from both Maribelle and Lissa, we were ready to finish this fight!

Lon'qu lured down another Wyvern Rider and dug his Killing Edge into its vitals, an instant kill (Wow, was he good when he was trying). Out of soldiers to command to their deaths, Commander Orton approached us with a Hand axe and managed to clip Virion with it. He fired an arrow in response, grounding the wyvern with a wing injury. Lon'qu switched to an Iron Sword and slashed at the rider, and I quickly moved in to strike with my Thunder Tome, ending the fight in an instant, but not before Orton gave us some chilling last words.

After we regrouped with Emmeryn, Lissa and Maribelle had their happy reunion. Seeing them like that loosened the tight

knot that had settled in my stomach since I had seen the torn apart village. I was genuinely happy too. And then Maribelle actually apologized for being short with me earlier (as if I was seriously offended, but it was a nice gesture).She 's just super protective of Lissa or something (you know, because I didn't realize that at all). I just hope she doesn't try to educate me in manners or something, Gods…

Chrom apologized for fighting for some bizarre reason (last time I checked, they attacked us first), but Emmeryn brushed him off and set him straight. We decided to hurry back to the capital to prepare ourselves for the now inevitable war. Marching back was even more solemn than before, the older Shepherds knowing how bad the first war was. The barracks were quiet as we unpacked and checked our weapon supplies, marking down what we did and didn't have (mostly so I could figure out what we needed to buy and how much it would cost). In reality, we were just distracting ourselves from thinking about what was going to happen next. Burying myself in numbers and planning in my (shared) room was the easiest thing I could do, occupying my brain until we were given another task. That was the problem with being a Tactician. You didn't have the luxury of being able to turn your brain off and fight like a soldier, because you were constantly thinking about other things-like making sure no one was killed following your orders, for example. I switched to my ongoing research on "Marth", pulling out the history tome I borrowed from the castle's library. Speaking of the castle, Chrom still hadn't come back even when Lissa did. It looked like something was eating at him too ever since Gangrel talked about the cause of the last war. Is he actually bothered by what that monster said?

Anyway, back to Marth. My studies have given me more to consider regarding the mystery swordsman. First of all, the real Marth was a man (and I checked multiple sources to confirm this fact), and this one certainly was not. Her face was too soft looking, there was a detectable sway of her hips as she walked (men did this too, but only to a certain degree), and her voice was forcefully gruff. Her clothing was authentic though, I'd give her that. There was a chance that she was a descendant of Marth's, but then she would be Ylissean royalty, which made no sense. And then there was that portal she came from…

After temporarily giving up on my speculations, I went outside to take a walk (anything was better than sitting around), and found Stahl working on something in a small bowl (surprising) while eating an apple (not surprising). Having nothing better to do (okay that was a lie, I could have done a whole list of things), I went over to investigate. It turned out that he was making the tonic for Chrom using the herbs we found before, and he invited me to help him out (at least I think that was what he asked, he kind of had food in his mouth. So cute…) And then this somehow turned into an impromptu teaching session on how to make medicine. He explained that it was just like cooking, which didn't help me at all because I can't do that either. There were surprisingly few Shepherds who knew how to cook well. We spent a couple of hours mixing things and grinding stuff up into something actually drinkable. It definitely took my mind off the whole "we're at war" thing for a while.

It's getting kind of late (and Chrom still hasn't come back yet, so I guess he's staying the castle for the night), and I should probably wrap this up and go to bed. Right after I get Sumia to stop polishing her armor, of course. She's been working on that for the past hour or so, and she keeps dropping it, making her polish it again. It's both annoying and saddening to watch. I'm starting to suspect this is some sort of nervous tic. Well, time to get that breastplate away from her so we can both sleep…

Waiting for What Comes Next

Aly

AN: This entry was kind of a downer, but the game did give that sort of feel at this point. The Avatar is still a newbie tactician at the start of the game, so I think it would affect her heavily for a war to suddenly break out in a place she just got used to. I hope I conveyed that emotion and the other character's emotions well enough.

Chapter 11: Chapter 11

Yah, sorry about the delay. Life got complicated for a while. Next Chapter should feature Donny in it, and then we're off to Regna Ferox.

Journal Entry #8

Well, the Ylissean-Plegian war is definitely heating up. Last night, we had to stop an assassination attempt on Emmeryn. We were warned beforehand, so it could have been much worse, but it was still an unpleasant experience. It felt even worse after Chrom finally told me what was bothering him a few minutes before it started. After another day of waiting around in the Barracks, I grew tired of everyone's nervous pacing and time killing and decided to go find Chrom and get some information out of him. He still hadn't shown his face outside of the castle, and it was starting to look like he was trying to actively avoid us all now. It was time he stopped moping about whatever he was stuck on. It was dark when I found him, wandering the castle's borders in deep thought. He barely noticed me approaching until I spoke up. I asked him what he was doing so late, and he said he was just thinking. (If it took him two days to think, I can definitely see why he made me Tactician. Not that I was planning on saying that to him.) He mentioned our nearing trip back to Regna Ferox, but then he launched into a story about what really happened during Ylisse's last war with Plegia.

So apparently, Gangrel was not entirely wrong with his reasoning. Chrom's father *did* start a long war with Plegia years ago, when he was Exalt. It was a violent and costly war that was paid with the lives of many on both sides. Ylisse suffered greatly from it until he died fifteen years ago, all the able bodied citizens sent to fight on the front lines, and almost all of Ylisse's resources drained to nothing. It was a wonder that the Halidom was still in a single piece afterwards. To think that Chrom, Emmeryn and Lissa had to deal with the aftermath of such a huge thing. Lady Emmeryn literally became Exalt at the age of ten, and had to fix such a broken kingdom. Plegia was raging for blood, and her own citizens wanted revenge for their pain. Neither were very forgiving (some people even insulted and threw things at her), but she still managed to bring peace back. After hearing that, I could see why Chrom was taking this all so hard. After seeing soemone struggle so hard to accomplish something, it would be sickening to watchi it all fall to pieces again in a single moment. He wants to fight to protect the peace she created, but now he believes he's failed her. I'd want Gangrel dead after that too.

And then Marth showed up (it's like every other fight we get into, Marth's involved somehow.) anyway, Marth snuck into the castle to warn us of the assassination, claiming to know of future events. That literally blew about half of my theories on her identity out of the water. Must I always be wrong about people? At least I was correct about her being a woman... Anyway, Marth claimed that she knew there would be an attempt on Emmeryn's life tonight, and she immediately proved her accuracy by killing a would-be Assassin hiding in the bushes that was after Chrom. We believed her immediately, but then an unexpected second Assassin came out and almost sliced her open (guess she didn't predict that one). Chrom killed him quickly, but not before Marth's mask was destroyed, showing her entire face for the both of us to see.

A large explosion rocked the castle, and we ran inside to see what was going on. As Marth claimed, we were being attacked by Plegian soldiers that somehow slipped past the guards. All the castle's lights had been snuffed out, and it was nearly pitch black, but we could still hear the sounds of battle near the main entrance. The Ylissean guard could only hold out for so long before their line was broken, leaving the Exalt vulnerable. Emmeryn told Chrom and Lissa to flee, but they refused to leave her to die. We had very little time to get ready before the assassins would be on us. The rest of the Shepherds gathered, and I started to form a strategy.

One of Phila's Pegasus Knights informed me of the rough number of enemies that had made it into the castle, and that their leader was trailing behind the main force. There was more variation in this group than the ones in the last battle, and over double as many men as our own. There were Thieves, Fighters, Dark Mages, and even a squad of Cavaliers that managed to get in. We would have to take advantage of the narrow hallways to stop from being overwhelmed by sheer force. I sent Miriel, Frederick, Kellam, and Lissa outside to help the Pegasus Knights repel any reinforcements that could possibly come, and kept the others for the inner defense. Marth also stayed with us, taking it upon herself to guard one of the central halls leading to Emmeryn. Her sword did this weird glowing thing, but she refused to tell us what it meant. (Another possible clue to her identity, maybe?) Anyway, we would concentrate our protection on the left corrider, the only other way to get to Emmeryn. After we weathered the storm of soldiers, we would go after their commander. Plan decided upon, we got into position.

The enemy fell on us like waves, one replacing another as soon as they were killed. We struggled to keep control of the small area we had claimed in the castle's back, using the doorways as chokepoints to limit their mobility. THe darkness was even more of a disadvantage making it harder to see someone coming. Chrom, Sully, and Ricken handled the far left doors, with Virion firing away from behind the safely of the wall. They were handling their end pretty well, and Chrom even found a sympathetic Theif in the enemy ranks who was wiling to join. (He wanted CANDY of all things. Who wants

to get paid in sweets?) Stahl, Vaike, Mirabelle, and myself were having a rougher time towards the east wing. Once the Cavaliers got to us, we were forced to retreat to Chrom's end to avoid being swarmed to death. Once we had regrouped, I helped Marth drive them off with my tome while the Stahl and Vaike helped Sumia and Lon'qu control the middle hall. We were relieved by yet another ally joining us, a strange woman named Panne. Marth swore she was on our side, and she proved it by fighting alongside us...after turning into a giant killer rabbit. (I will never understand the concept of a Taguel...) The rest of the battle went slow, but surprisingly smooth once Stahl and Vaike were finally able to hold the line against the now weakened enemies. They finally stopped coming after what felt like hours. Thinking we had won, we retreated further within the castle to heal our wounds. And then Validar came.

He was a tall man, with dark skin and hair that stuck out in a cylinder shape. His eyes were sharp and almost inhuman, and he wore a dark Sorceror's cloak. He must have moved closer during the fight, staying outside of our notice until he was right upon us. We all rushed to keep him from Emmeryn, but when I got within his sight, he gave me the most disturbing smile I had ever seen. He said he knew me, and that if I gave in to him, I would get the truth. I froze up, his words catching my interest for a moment. Was he involved in how I ended up in that field with no memory? Before I could say anything to him in response, Virion shot him with an arrow, forcing me to come down to earth again. Validar turned and yelled at him for his interference before summoning his dark magic to attack, only to be forcefully cut off by Chrom's blade stabbing into him. Sully rode in and finished him off for good, and he sort of melted into smoke, like he wasn't even human.

After the battle was completely over and the rest of the assassins were driven off, everyone regrouped. Emmeryn was uninjured and well, so I guess we were sucessful in defying destiny. Marth had mysteriously disappeared again, and Chrom ran off to find her, leaving the rest of us alone with our rabbit friend. Panne's "warren" owed Ylisse a debt, and that was the only reason she helped us. Humans had been the ones to hunt and kill her entire family, and she was still bitter over it. Emmeryn apologized for her loss even though it had nothing to do with her at all, sypthasizing with her plight. Panne seemed to take it to heart, so maybe she'll stick around with us longer.

Later that night, Chrom, Phila, Frederick, and Emmeryn discussed our next move. We were to escort Emmeryn to a safer location in eastern Ylisse to throw off any other attempts to harm her, and then we would continue to Regna Ferox as planned. Chrom wants us to do one last patrol around southern Ylisse before we leave, just in case the Plegians tried an invasion.

So yeah, we now have two new Shepherds. Gaius the Theif and Panne the Taguel.

Gaius kinda looked kinda bored most of the time, except when sugar was involved. He always had candy stored in one of his pockets or in his cloak or behind his ears (or in his mouth). He had bright orange hair and wore a headband all the time.

Panne was almost feral in a way. She talked and pretty much acted perfectly human, except she was furry in places, didn't wear a ton of clothing, and had two rabbit ears. You could forget she was a Taguel for a few momoents until you saw her transform with her Beaststone. I've never read about anyone capable of doing something like that in my books, so I kinda want to study her more in action. (not sure how well she'd take that though...)

At least Chrom seems to have recovered from his super anti-social behavior. (If I wasn't allowed to sulk around the castle deep in thought, then neither is he! Gods, our relationship is weird...) Now that we have something to actively do, everyone feels a little more certain in themselves. I could finally put myself to use and start studying Plegia's military power and possible counters to it. I raided the library again and now I have another huge stack of books. I say another because Sumia also got me a stack of fiction books. She found them in a crate on the side of the road or something. Who in their right mind would throw out books? So I got suckered into reading a few of those in my "spare time". At least I'm learning some Ylissean culture this way. (or am I relearning it?)

I'm still thinking about what that Validar guy said. what if he really did know who I was? What if my only lead to my identity was now disintegrated? Would I ever figure out what happened to me? It's been at least a month already, and I've remembered nothing about my past other than my first name. I'm starting to think I'll never regain my memories...but was that actually a bad thing? What was I like before I forgot everything?

Well, we have a long march to the southern islands of Ylisse, so I really should sleep. As soon as I finish this book on Wyvern Wars...Just a few more pages for the night...

Lost Again,

Aly